

**Achievement of Market-Friendly Initiatives and Results Program
(AMIR 2.0 Program)**

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**Develop Alternative Accommodation Options in Jordan:
A Scheme for the Development and Regulation of B & B Accommodation in
Jordan**

Final Report

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tourism is one of the most important sectors of Jordan's economy. The Government, led by his Excellency Dr Taleb Al Rifa'i, Minister for Tourism & Antiquities is working to develop a result driven partnership between the Public and Private Sectors. This will form a basis for a "root and branch" examination of Jordan's approach to the development of the tourism economy, which is already underway. The examination will cover both the strategic direction and the operational effectiveness that will be necessary if the targets and objectives that will be agreed are to be met.

One of the early moving actions indicated is to develop more choice in the accommodation range, and a decision was made that B&B accommodation would be the priority, as it is seen as bringing a number of advantages. Its development can:

- Proceed quickly.
- Offer an extension of existing accommodation choices to the tourist.
- Provide for overnight accommodation in developing areas not already served by hotels.
- Provide new opportunity for the development of small business.
- Assist communities to engage economically with tourism and to benefit from it

B&B, as a form of accommodation, is already well known in the most important source markets for Jordan's future tourism. It can combine well with many of the priority segments selected for promotion, such as adventure and cultural heritage. It is also appealing to the youth market and to free independent travellers. Experience shows that it does not compete directly with hotels, except at the very lowest level, and that it develops its own distinct markets.

The Study Tour to Ireland demonstrated the extent of the B&B product throughout the country, and confirmed the validity of the concept that was already being planned by Jordan. His Excellency the Minister, with the JTB took the opportunity of visiting a typical B&B, and meeting with the owners for a discussion on operational and marketing matters.

This report sets out a proposed scheme. While it covers the essential internationally accepted quality norms, it has been specifically modified for Jordan. It recommends that in common with other forms of accommodation, that it should be regulated. This will ensure that premises meet defined criteria and will safeguard visitor assurance and quality, both of which are very necessary to achieve market confidence in the product.

This basic scheme will now be examined critically by a specialist consultant and developed to implementation readiness. The stated intention is to begin developing the product on a pilot basis in selected areas as soon as possible.

2. PREAMBLE

The purpose of the scheme is to set down criteria which, when agreed, can form the basis for the development of the B&B accommodation product in Jordan. The process recommended is that all forms of accommodation should be regulated and controlled, so that the quality aspects can be assured. This is necessary to meet the positioning of Jordan as a boutique destination, targeting high yield visitors, and its strategy to ensure quality experiences for them.

To initiate the scheme properly, it must derive from a general or specific legal power available to the Ministry or Minister under the law. This power anchors the scheme to the law, and its operation can then be covered by regulations and can be amended as required.

INTRODUCTION

B&B is designed as a home stay product that provides overnight accommodation with breakfast in family homes. As the standard of the family home has risen, so also has the standard necessary to serve the expectations of the B&B market. The product has four core ingredients:

- The physical aspects of the property and its condition.
- The comfort and privacy aspect in providing a safe, clean and comfortable bed, together with bathroom facilities, to a standard of privacy acceptable to the consumer and market.
- The preparation, service and presentation of the breakfast meal in acceptable hygienic conditions.
- The personality, training and capacity of the host (owner(s)) to deliver the services, within a welcoming context that is more personal than larger accommodation units, and to promote and develop their product.

The B&B product extends the range of accommodation choice available to the visitor, particularly outside the main centres. It is a good value product, but additionally it appeals to the many visitors, who seek more personal experiences and engagement with local people. It is particularly valuable in allowing communities to engage locally with the tourism economy and to spread its benefits.

The initiation of the product and its foundation regulations are critical to sustainable and future development of the segment. The standards set for properties should be stated as simply as possible, but they must also be sufficiently high to reflect future marketability and response to customer needs.

This inevitably focuses on the ensuite bedroom, where the provision of shower and toilet greatly enhances marketability, acceptability and price. Rooms without these facilities will experience additional sales difficulties currently, and in the near future may be unacceptable. Any incentive or assistance scheme to develop the B&B sector should be directed to achieve this as a first priority.

THE PROPOSED SCHEME

This scheme has been set down to provide a regulatory framework for the development of the B&B sector in Jordan, and to define the compliance requirements that are necessary for homes and operators to register under the provision.

LEGAL BASIS

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should be empowered to create registers for all forms of accommodation used by tourists as it may decide. The Ministry should establish, publish, and enforce regulations in respect of the different registers, for the proper licensing and operation of accommodation for tourist use.

Where the Ministry has created a register, all operators engaged in offering the accommodation type described in the register, shall apply for listing or licensing under its regulations. It shall be against the law for any operator to offer such services to visitors for reward, unless they have first been approved and licensed under the regulations.

PREMISES

Premises for use as B&B accommodation for visitors should be professionally constructed residential homes of durable materials. They should be safe and in good condition throughout, including the exterior, interior, and immediately surrounding areas or grounds forming part of the property.

The premises should have an effective means of natural and artificial lighting with ventilation, cooling and heating capabilities as necessary, to maintain room temperatures of 22 degrees Celsius. The ceiling height should not be less than 2.4 meters.

The premises must at all times be clean and tidy, with a layout and surfaces that will facilitate hygiene, and comply with health regulations for the preparation of food for human consumption.

Floors should be of polished wood, tile or have a suitable floor covering that is clean, undamaged and unstained.

The premises must be the domestic residence of the operator(s), and must comply with the laws and statutory requirements in respect of planning, use and operation, as may be required under the legal codes of the Kingdom.

The premises should be easily accessible, and should carry an approved sign indicating that it offers B&B that is clearly visible to passers-by.

THE OPERATOR

The operator or operators should be agreeable and capable of providing the necessary services to tourists, and should not have any criminal record. They should not have been convicted of any breach of the law against the person or property, that in the judgement of the registrar would render them unsuitable.

THE ENTRANCE

The entrance should be of sufficient size to cater adequately for tourists arriving and departing with luggage, and taking into account the volume of traffic normally using the services of the B&B and the family.

Stairs leading to upper or lower floors should be safe and well lit, with no damage or extreme wear to the steps or their covering. They must also be fitted with a handrail.

The operator should maintain a simple guest register, where guests can enter their names and addresses.

BEDROOMS FOR GUESTS

In addition to the accommodation for the family's private use, there should be a minimum of two bedrooms, and a maximum of six bedrooms that are exclusively available for short term letting to visitors.

Each bedroom should be at least 12 sq. meters in size and be safe, clean and fit for purpose and should contain as a minimum:

- A lockable door.
- A window of a size to admit sufficient natural light to the room, as well as artificial lights, at least one of which is located bedside and can be controlled from the bed.
- A bed or beds with mattress, sheets and bed covering of high quality that is clean and unstained. Nylon materials are not acceptable.
- A wardrobe, press or clothes hanging area, with a supply of hangers available.
- A chair, seat or stool.
- A side table, dressing table or other suitable built in furnishing to act as such.
- A mirror.
- A container for rubbish.
- Suitable furniture and decoration.
- Plugs capable of providing power to a hairdryer and electric razor.
- A wash hand basin, with hot and cold water taps. There should be a mirror over the basin and a shelf adjacent, where the shower/bathroom is not ensuite with the bedroom.

Each guest should receive a key to the door of the bedroom and house, specifically assigned to him or her.

Towels for visitors - at least one hand towel and one bath towel per visitor should be left in the bedroom, where washing facilities are not ensuite.

BATHROOMS AND TOILETS

Separate and sufficient bathroom and toilet facilities for the family's use should be in place. In addition, the following are required for use by tourists, and should be as adjacent as possible to the bedroom accommodation.

- A separate bathroom or shower room for each three rooms reserved for B&B, or each six tourists that can be accommodated.
- A separate toilet with wash hand basin for each three rooms reserved for B&B, or for each six tourists that can be accommodated.

Wash hand basins and toilet bowls should be made of vitreous china or other durable material that will not stain with normal use, and can be easily cleaned.

Baths should be of strong and durable materials that will not stain with normal use. It is desirable that they have non-slip strips or similar treatment, and that there is a hand rail or bar to facilitate use.

Baths, wash hand basins and showers should be separately and professionally plumbed. Low quality domestic fittings made of rubber or flexible materials attached by hand to taps are not acceptable.

DINING AREA

An area should be set aside as a designated dining area for breakfast or any other meals the operator may offer. It should be of adequate size to reflect the capacity of the B&B. It should be in proximity to the kitchen (it is not acceptable as part of the kitchen), so the cooked food does not have to pass through other rooms or areas and should contain;

- A window providing natural light to the area.
- Table or tables with chairs or seat furniture.
- Side table, buffet or suitable built in furniture to facilitate service, and to store delft, cutlery and dining accompaniments.

In the interests of guest comfort and health, smoking should not be permitted, and a sign or notice to this effect should be displayed on the table or in the area.

LOUNGE OR SITTING AREA

An area should be set aside as a designated lounge or sitting area, separate from the family area where tourists can sit. It should be of adequate size to cater for the capacity of the B&B and should contain:

- Comfortable sitting chairs and soft furnishings.
- Low table(s).
- A TV.
- Books, passive games and tourism information for the guidance of visitors.

KITCHEN

The kitchen can be the normal domestic kitchen provided it is of sufficient size, well lit, fitted with a suitable cooker, hygienic easy clean surfaces and other cooking equipment. It should contain:

- A cooker of adequate size to cook for family requirements and visitors, fitted with an extractor hood or suitable extractor fan to remove cooking smells.
- A fire blanket or fire extinguisher of the powder type should be located adjacent to the cooker.
- A refrigerator of adequate size.
- A food preparation area, with hygienic and easy clean surfaces covered with durable materials.
- Food storage areas that are enclosed by doors.
- Utensil storage areas that permit neat storage of cooking equipment.
- A sink unit of sufficient size, with hot and cold plumbed water taps.
- A window that is capable of being opened, and that can allow sufficient natural light to light the entire room.

It should not be necessary for guests to walk through the kitchen to access guest areas of the premises.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

While not compulsory under the scheme, the following are recommended as good practice for operators:

- Insurance to cover public and employee liability, in addition to normal risks.
- A telephone(s) for guest use that is connected to a national system.
- Fire warning devices and safety notices.
- Availability of first aid kit.
- Car parking facilities can be a distinct advantage for your guests.
- Dietary facilitation for vegetarian and alternative food choice.

SPECIAL EXEMPTION

The Registrar, where he is satisfied with the overall standard and quality achieved by a premises, may grant exemption from any provisions in the regulations, where in the view of the Registrar, they would be inconsistent with the preservation of architectural features in traditional or vernacular houses of architectural, historic or cultural merit. The Registrar may impose conditions and/or time limits in respect of any exemptions.

The Registrar may also approve for limited or occasional B&B use, temporary and other structures, including structures made by traditional methods, and using traditional materials, such as desert lodges or traditional tent accommodation that may not be able to satisfy the normal regulations, and where he is satisfied that the overall standard and quality can meet visitor requirements.